The Little Missionary;

OR, A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF GRATIA OLIVE LEONARD.

Aunt J., I have picked the best for you. p. 28.

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Little Missionary;

OR, A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF GRATIA OLIVE LEONARD.

Around the throne of God in heaven
Thousands of children stand;
Children whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy band—
Singing glory, glory, glory.

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PREFACE.

My Dear Children:

I have written this little story for *you*. Read it carefully, and be made better. Learn the lessons it would teach you.

The subject of this sketch was a child of uncommon grace and loveliness—always cheerful and full of kindness—of bright and ready understanding.

Much that I have written about her is from her mother, and in her mother's language.

I knew her well for several years, and though I was quite young, her daily life

was a lesson of love to me. This is why I have been prompted to write this little work.

If, by reading it, *one* little boy or girl is led to love God, I shall feel that I have been more than repaid.

M. J. P. R.

GRATIA OLIVE LEONARD;

OR,

The Little Missionary.

CHAPTER I.

Now, dear children, we are all ready for a story; but first, let me say a few words about something else, for I love you much and wish to do you good.

You all know what it is to do right, and you know when you do wrong, for your dear mother has often told you. And you know also that when you do right, you are happy, and every thing around you seems pleasant; but when you do wrong, you are unhappy, and your face, which should be bright with smiles, is cloudy and frowning, and nothing pleases you.

Then you sometimes think you will never be naughty again. But ah! how soon you forget, and are even naughtier than before.

Do you know why it is that you fail to be good? I will tell you. It is because you do not ask God to help you do right.

Now you cannot be good unless God assists you, because you have a wicked heart to lead you to do wrong again.

God has given you a soul, a very precious soul! Oh, how precious! I cannot tell you how great its worth, and he wishes you to take care of it and watch over it constantly, for it is immortal. It will live forever and ever. It can never, *never* die.

When God formed your body, he placed within it this wonderful thing, and when your body dies, (if you are his child,) this soul of yours will soar away to live with him in Heaven.

Did I hear you say, "How can I take care of such a precious soul? I am not

old enough, and I don't know how?" Oh yes, dear children, you are *old* enough, and God will teach you how, if you pray to him to help you.

Don't you remember how Christ took little children in his arms and blessed them? Well, he loves them just the same now, as when he was upon the earth, and by his Holy Spirit he leads them to love and serve God.

He often takes good children, who have lived but a few years, home to his own bosom. Thus he took our dear little Gratia, of whom I am about to tell you.

She died before she was eight years old; and though she was so young, she was prepared to live with God in the beautiful mansions he has prepared for such as love him. Now, I trust, she is a glorious angel with shining garments, and her lovely face is radiant with the joys of that delightful world. We think

we almost hear her shouting her infant praises with the multitude of happy spirits.

Little Gratia lived several years ago, perhaps before some of you were born.

She was very beautiful when a babe. She had bright, laughing, black eyes and a sweet and happy face.

So have I a beautiful baby sister, you say! Yes, so you have; and I trust she will be as good as Gratia, when she grows older.

If you are good, she will try to be like you.

When Gratia was but little more than two years old, she was very sick for about ten weeks; yet she was patient and pleasant through it all. She was only an infant in years, but her mind was much more active and mature than is usual at that age. Her dear mother says of her at this time, "Those who watched over her during her sickness, can

never forget her sweet and almost unearthly countenance, her uncommon patience, and her readiness to take or have done for her any thing that was thought best."

Perhaps many of my little readers have been sick. If you have, and your kind mother wished you to take something to relieve you, did you receive it pleasantly, or did you become impatient and refuse to take it, and thus by your naughtiness trouble and grieve your dear mother, who is ever so watchful for your good and so anxious for your recovery? If you will always remember how fondly your parents love you, and how careful they are to secure your comfort and happiness, you will try, by your obedience, to reward their kindness and love.

When Gratia was but about a year old, her mother taught her to pray, and as soon as she was able to lisp a sentence,

she would pray in her own infant words, "O God, make little-ee Gratia a good child. May I love Thee! Amen." This was her simple prayer. O how sweet it was! God delights to hear such prayers.

She could not be content to let the time for daily prayer pass unnoticed; and her mother says, "If any thing occurred to prevent our going away at the usual hour, she would come, and taking me by the finger, softly say, 'Come, mother,' showing me that it was not forgotten."

As Gratia grew older, she was taught the Lord's prayer, with other prayers and hymns.

She always repeated these on going to rest, still closing her devotions with a prayer in her own words, in which she would pray for the forgiveness of her sins; for a clean heart; for her father and mother; and for the heathen and poor orphans.

She loved and pitied the poor orphans, and was deeply interested in them.

Her little prayer for them would often be in words like these: "Will the Lord have mercy upon the poor orphans, and those who have no mother to pray with them! Will the Lord be their father and friend!"

One day, a person called at the house to obtain subscriptions for a magazine devoted to the interest of orphans. Gratia listened eagerly to what was said, then whispered, "May I give some of my money, mother?" "Certainly, if you wish," her mother replied; "how much will you give?" "My twenty-five cents!" was her gentle reply. This had been a present to her not many days before. "That will be all you have, dear," said her mother. "I know it, mother; I wish to give *all*," she replied; being full of joy that she was able to bestow a *little* upon the needy.

Now, little boys and girls, come tell me what you do with all the money you get? Do you carry it to the Sunday-school and drop it into the missionary box? Perhaps you give most of it to the poor orphan children, as Gratia did.

I trust you are not so foolish as to buy candies and nuts, because those will do you harm; but if you give it to poor suffering children, it will make both you and them happy; and besides, you will gain their love and please God. Thus *you*, though young, will be the means of doing great good, and God will bless you.

Gratia was not only ready to do good, but she was ever afraid of doing wrong.

She was very early troubled, thinking there was an evil spirit who came to disturb her and to tempt her to do wrong. She gave him a very singular name, and I presume it will make you laugh. It

was Pamah-pep. No one knew why she gave it this queer name, or where she found it.

When at play, she would often speak out, "Go away! Pamah-pep, go away!" as if something was trying to make her naughty.

Sometimes, when she was doing any thing wrong, she would say, "It was not little-ee Gratia. It was Pamah-pep!" When her mother asked what she meant by Pamah, she would reply, "He came to make me be naughty."

She used this singular name until she was able to read and understand, that there was indeed an evil spirit abroad in the earth to tempt not only little children, but men and women to do wrong. After Gratia was able to read the Bible, she would repeat the words of our Saviour, when he was tempted, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

While she was yet quite young, and

before she could read, the Bible was read to her, with many other books; and she was so delighted to listen, that much of her time was spent in this way.

She was so attentive when her little story-books were read to her, that often after she had heard them two or three times, she would take the book, and with correctness repeat the story as if she was reading it, making appropriate pauses, and putting every word in its place.

CHAPTER II.

It was quite an advantage, beside being very pleasant, for Gratia to be able to repeat so well from memory. I will show you why. One day, Rev. Mr. Knapp, an aged minister living in the town where Gratia resided, called at her father's house. It happened to be at a time when Gratia had many of her little books about. While there, he asked her if she would read to him. She immediately answered his request by taking up an almanac and turning to the story of "The Buried Child," written by a missionary. She commenced reading, at the same time placing her finger underneath the line, and following with it each word as she pronounced it. Every word was spoken and every pause made correctly,

Mr. Knapp *overlooking* her all the while. When she had finished, Mr. Knapp, looking at her as if thinking she were too young to read so well, said, "Why, Gratia, you are a very fine reader."

He was greatly surprised on learning from her mother that she did not know a letter. Now, my little readers, how do you suppose Gratia could read so well, and not know her letters? If you will listen thoughtfully and carefully, I will tell you, for I fear you will not be able to guess. When her mother read to her, she gave *all* her attention to the story: she was not thinking of her kitten, or her new doll; or of any of her playthings. Her thoughts were all upon the story, and this is why she was able to repeat it so exactly.

She was but three years old at this time; you are six, seven and eight, and some of you are nine and ten years old, perhaps, yet I fear you do not remember

so well as she, even when you read the story yourself. I wish you to read this so carefully, that you can tell me all about it, when you have read it only twice.

It was my happy lot to live by the side of Gratia's home for nearly three years, and I saw her often—almost every day.

I was then not more than twelve years old, but her conduct and conversation made a lasting impression upon my mind. One feature in her character I ever looked upon with silent admiration, and it still brings her memory back to my heart with a most sacred charm. My admiration then was childish, but now I reflect with older thoughts and wonder at her most *perfect obedience*. I never knew her disobey in a *single instance*, and her mother tells me she can call to mind but one instance where there was any inclination to disobey.

Her aunt Mary, who lived at the next house, had a nice flower-garden in her father's yard, and Gratia, being very fond of flowers, would walk cautiously about in the paths, admiring the rich blossoms and expressing her delight. Her mother had forbidden her picking any, telling her they were her aunt's. One day, when she was out with her aunt Mary, she said to her, pointing to some choice plants, "Gratia, aunty wishes to save those for seed, and you must not pick them." Gratia was full of life and frolic, and while her aunt was yet speaking, she snapped off the very blossom she had forbidden her to take, jumping and screaming with delight. And her aunt Mary says, "I ran after her, but could not catch her; she snatched from its stem every flower in her way, while I could not keep from laughing, to see how quickly and mischievously she did it. My immoderate

laughter probably encouraged her in her work of destruction and disobedience."

Her mother called to her, and she stopped immediately. She was punished, however; but was never after known to pluck a flower without permission, though she was often seen walking cautiously among them, as before, now and then stooping down to peep into their half-open cups, and smell them. This was her obedience to her mother. She did not say to herself, "Mother will not see me, so I will pick *just one.*" She knew and remembered that God was looking upon her, and that he would notice every disobedient act she committed.

But the next year our little Gratia had a flower-garden of her own, which she cultivated with childish pleasure. She kept this little garden as long as she lived, and one bunch of violets still remains in the same spot where they were placed for her.

She was not only willing to obey, but *gentle* in her obedience, never manifesting anger or dislike. Never can I forget her sweet submission to all her mother's wishes; neither would I forget it, for I desire to imitate it myself and to exhibit it to others.

She used frequently to come over and stay with me nearly all day. I was delighted to have her, for she was pleasant company to old and young—always affectionate, cheerful, and yielding.

How oft has been the time she would come and take her place at her mother's bed-room window to watch for me, and as soon as I appeared, she would call out in a clear, pleasant voice, her face all lighted with smiles, "Miss M. J.," (she always called me *Miss*, though I was but twelve years old) "would you like to have little-ee Gratia come over and see you today?" And I was only too happy to reply, "Yes, Gratia; will you come?" "I

don't know, but I will go and ask my mother," and away she would run, full of joy. She would be gone but a moment, when her little bright face would again appear, not changed and pouting at disappointment, but with the same happy smile. And when I asked, "Well, Gratia, will you come?" she would answer, "I would like to come, but *my mother doesn't think it best;* it is rather damp—or too windy—or I have some cold." And then she would add with the most lovely, yielding spirit, "I can come *just as well* some other time." Oh, how noble! I cannot dwell upon it enough. She loved to submit. It was sufficient, if her mother did not approve. She would not continue to tease her with fretful and troublesome questions, "Why cannot I go, mother? I'm sure 'tis not very damp; and I shall be in-doors all the time there, as well as at home. It's but a step, you know. Do let me go,

mother; the wind doesn't blow harder than it has a great many times, when I have been out. Please, mother, let me go!" and if still refused, go away pouting and sullen, determined to make every one unhappy and herself, too, by being cross and unkind.

No, the sunlight was still as bright in Gratia's heart; she was just as smiling and happy if denied; and, my dear children, you can be. You too can feel, that "mother does'nt think it best," and that you can go "just as well some other time." Try and see how very pleasant it is, and how easily *you* can yield to the wishes of your parents; and I am sure your father and mother will think you are the best child they ever knew, and they will wonder what has been done to you, that you have become so good.

CHAPTER III.

ANOTHER beautiful feature in Gratia's character was her *self-denial*. She early learned that she could not indulge her appetite for fruit during the warm months, without injury to her health; but if she had been told that it would do her harm to eat this or that, never was she known to say, "I wish I might have some. Cannot I have just a little, mother?" When she saw others eating any thing of which she was very fond, she would sometimes say, "When winter comes, I may eat as much of it as I please!"

Her aunt M., in speaking of this pleasant trait, says, "Being on a visit one day at her father's house, we were all grouped together partaking from a large basket of very nice, ripe fruit, of a kind

Gratia loved best, but of which she could not then even taste, as the weather was still warm, and she had been quite sick. It is with the most tender feelings I recall the expression of her dear face, as running around the group and stooping over the basket full of the most tempting fruit, she picked them over gently and selected three or four of the largest and ripest. Then bounding over to me and seeing my eye bent upon her, she said, quickly, 'Aunt J., I have picked the best for you—how nice!—you can have them all: will you eat them?'"

She seemed to have forgotten herself entirely, and gave up freely what she loved so well, not even asking to taste. I have not told you that Gratia had a dear baby brother; and how fond of him she was; and how she loved to rock his cradle; and how she would amuse him with her toys and play. When she was but little more than four years old, God

took away this infant brother and made him a bright angel, to live in heaven with him, and Gratia was again an only child.

The death of this darling babe led Gratia to think a great deal of God and heaven, and she talked much of her loved brother, and thought how happy he was amid the joys of that blissful home. She learned a little song that she found in one of her books, and would often repeat it to her mother; and would repeat it with so much feeling, that it would make a listener weep.

Perhaps you have learned it; it is found in many books for children. Here is a single verse:

"Mother, how still the baby lies!—
I cannot hear his breath;
I cannot see his laughing eyes—
They tell me, this is death!"

Her mother says, "When talking of him, she would often be in raptures, and

become so animated, that her face would glow with pleasure and her eyes sparkle with joy. Her thoughts of him were always pleasant. She would often pray that she might be good, so as to spend eternity with him, singing praises to God and the Lamb.

Gratia's time was always pleasantly, and much of it usefully, occupied. During the winter after her brother's death, she learned many pretty hymns for children.

There was one for the morning, that she would often repeat to her mother on meeting her immediately after rising:

"Good morning, dear mother! through all the cold night
How sweet have I slept, and how still, and how warm!
My heavenly Father watched over your child,
And guarded her safe from each danger and harm.

"And precious new blessings each moment he gives;
I will love him, and thank him, and praise him each day;
I will ask him to make me his own little child:
Then all his commands I shall gladly obey."

She would say this with such sweetness and good feeling, as made her mother very happy. She also learned a little prayer, that was one among her favourites:

"Jesus, Saviour, Son of God,
Who for me life's pathway trod,
Who for me became a child,—
Make me humble, meek, and mild.

"I thy little child would be;
Jesus, I would follow thee;
Samuel was thy child of old,
Take me too within thy fold."

She would not hasten through these childish hymns, as if they had no meaning, but would think of them as speaking to herself. She learned others that were appropriate for the close of the day, with many little songs, such as—

"Pretty bee, pray tell me, why
Thus from flower to flower you fly."

She was often asked by strangers to repeat some of her songs, and she would

always do it with a simple, modest grace, and without any show of vanity.

During the winter, all her little plans and plays were for doing good. She talked a great deal about the heathen children. Of course, she was not large enough to do very much, and many little girls, no older, would think they couldn't do *any thing*.

But Gratia did something that was very thoughtful for a child four years old, and it ought to make us all feel ashamed that *we* do no more.

She made a great many *rag-dolls* and sold them to obtain money. She would put quite a number of these in a basket, then put on her bonnet, and go over to call first upon her grandmother and Aunt M., whom I told you lived next door. They were curious things, to be sure, and would have made you laugh most heartily, for they made her grandmother and Aunt M. laugh, and her aunt

M. says, "Could you have seen her little face, so full of interest in her work, so earnest that you should buy, and so sober in asking aid for the poor, you would have thought her a missionary indeed, though so lately out of the cradle. It was altogether the most ludicrous scene you can imagine, and yet it was most touching. I inquired the price of her wares, and bought two or three.

She then acted the part of a tract-distributor, carrying a bundle of old printed leaves which she had picked up. I was employed in distributing tracts at this time, and no doubt this was what led her to take tracts on her mission for 'the poor.'. 'Aunty,' she asked, 'do you think you are a Christian?' She then made the same inquiry of her grandmother, with as much solemnity as if she felt herself really engaged in the work."

She then passed through into the other part of the house on the same errand.

There she offered her dolls at the same price, and gave the lady one of her tracts, and spoke to her of the religious state of her mind; but as the lady did not understand her as well as her grandmother and aunt, she did not sell any of her dolls. She then went to others, probably, telling nearly the same story.

CHAPTER IV.

GRATIA always engaged in every thing she undertook with an earnest zeal. All the money she received, and indeed all she ever possessed, was given to the orphan and to the missionary; and her mother says, "She was never known to wish it for any other use. She would often say to me, 'Mother, I wish to do good with my money.'"

It was this winter she formed the plan of being a teacher of the poor heathen, which plan she ever retained. The place she had chosen for her labours, was among the Hottentots in Africa.

No doubt the reason for her thinking so decidedly upon this spot, was on account of her hearing, about this time,

so much of the labours of missionaries among that degraded people.

The little story of "The Buried Child," already mentioned, she would repeat word for word, and it was this that she read to the Rev. Mr. Knapp. Perhaps you have forgotten it, or may never have seen it.—

"One morning, a poor Bechuana came to the house of Mr. Moffat, Wesleyan missionary in the Bechuana country, in South Africa, and said, 'Have you lost a kitten?' 'No; why do you ask me?' 'Because,' said the Bechuana, 'we thought we heard one mewing in the woods.' Presently, came another man, and knocked, and asked the same question, and then came a third likewise. Mr. Moffat thought it was very strange, and determined to go out into the woods and try to find what could make the noise; so he went, and Mrs. Moffat followed him. He walked about and list-

ened very attentively for a long time, but could hear nothing. At last he thought he heard a little sound, and he listened still more attentively, and thought it came from the ground. He stooped down and put his ear close, and found the place. He heard a weak cry, just like that of a kitten. He had no spade with him, but he scraped away the loose gravel and sand with his hands, and then he came to a great stone. He took up the stone, and what do you think he found? A kitten? No! a little babe! A poor little babe! Who *could* have put it there? *Its own mother!* She did not love her babe, so she put it there to die! It had been there all night, and it was a wonder it had not died; but God had heard its cry, and had sent Mr. Moffat to its living grave. He took it up and put it into Mrs. Moffat's arms, and she carried it home, and gave it milk, and dressed it, and took care of it. And

now this babe is grown up into a girl of fourteen, and she is with Mr. and Mrs. Moffat in England."

This was a very entertaining story for Gratia, and it excited all her sympathies.

Gratia was fond of play, like all children, and she would engage in sports as heartily as in her labours of love. One of her amusements was to run across the room from corner to corner, making plans and stories, as she called them. She would amuse herself for hours, if permitted, in composing letters, (she never learned to write,) talking of her dear buried brother—providing for the orphans—telling what she would do for the heathen and the poor beggar children—and laying plans for her garden and flowers. She would often laugh and call this flying, and wish she had wings to fly faster. Her aunt M. says of her: "Sometimes I have listened for hours while, bounding from corner to corner, she re-

lated some Scripture story, with all the earnestness of childhood and the correctness of riper years. She was also very fond of drawing upon her own imagination at such times. She would relate, without the least hesitation, long stories of good little children—bright angels—birds — flowers — and happy dreams of home. Yet such was her strict regard for truth in all she said, that, without an exception, I think, when she noticed any increased attention or unusual interest in my countenance, she would run to me instantly, and say, 'This is not a true story, Aunt Jane. I *made* it up for you.' Her little graceful form and beaming countenance, as she said this and bounded away, will long linger in memory—a cherished picture of childhood, simplicity, and happiness."

I will tell you of one of her favourite games, in which she always engaged with most lively spirits. The play is called

"The Twenty Questions." She usually played it with her aunt Mary, and frequently her father and mother would join with them. Her aunt would think of some particular thing, and Gratia must guess what it was. To aid her in guessing it out, she could ask twenty questions. For instance, if Aunt M. thought of a *lion*, Gratia would ask, "Is it of the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdom?" When her aunt would answer, "Animal," then perhaps Gratia would ask, "Is it wild or tame?" The answer, "Wild." After asking a few such questions, she would soon tell what her aunt thought of.

This is a very pleasant game for children, and gives them a good opportunity to learn to *think*.

In all Gratia's pursuits she did not fail to look for the approbation of her mother. This it was her delight to obtain. She would watch her eyes so closely, it seemed

as if she could almost read her thoughts. The weakest sigh or any thing but constant cheerfulness would disturb her. She could not be unhappy, and did not like to see others so. If any thing occurred to make them sad, she would ever try to change the subject to something more pleasant. She was light-hearted and free. In laying her miniature plans for the future, she never failed to say, "*If I live*, I will do so and so,"—and, "When I become *good*, I expect to be a missionary."

At one time, when she had been speaking of being a missionary, and going to teach the heathen children, her mother said to her, "Gratia, you would have to leave your father and mother; and if we live, we shall be old, and if you go, we shall have no daughter,—no child; and we shall be lonely and sad." She gazed into her mother's face for a moment, with an expression of deep anxiety, and then said,

"Mother, God would take care of you."

"But, Gratia," said her mother, "you would have to sail over the broad ocean, and the ship might be broken in pieces, and you would be drowned."

"If I was *good*, mother," replied Gratia, "it would matter little where I died; I should go to heaven."

O pure and simple faith! how like and yet how unlike a child! I would that all my little readers could feel as Gratia did, and would love God so well as to be willing to die at any time and in any place.

It was also during this winter, when she was four years old, that Gratia learned to read. Her father left home the first week in January, to be absent four weeks. When he left, she did not know her letters, but when he returned, she was able to read a chapter from the New Testament correctly. He was

very much surprised, and she as much delighted at learning to read. Her mother says, "She commenced with the alphabet, then took a primer, which had pictures, with very short words and sentences. She learned a short spelling and reading lesson *correctly* every day."

Do you know what correctly means? It does *not* mean *nearly* perfect; it does not mean *very well;* but it means that every word and letter was learned. And now we will see how much good it did her.

"When she had read and spelled that book through," says her mother, "she was able to read almost any thing or any book. She always kept this little primer, calling it her dictionary."

When she found a word in reading that she could not pronounce, she usually knew just where to look for it in her little dictionary, if she had ever seen it there.

After Gratia learned to read, she was eager to search every book that came in her way. She culled the family library, and if ever any thing was referred to in any of the books, she was often able to speak of it as if she had read it with understanding, though they were books far above her years.

CHAPTER V.

CHILDREN can learn to be missionaries when quite young, and can teach their playmates as well as children abroad. Gratia began her labours at home. She used to talk with her little playmates a great deal about their being good, and loving the Saviour, and trying to be Christians. She has often been heard repeating texts of Scripture to them, and then trying to explain their meaning. She would tell them in a gentle, loving way about Jesus, when he was upon earth; how he took little children in his arms and blessed them, and invited them to come to him at all times; and how he died upon the cross for them as well as for older people. Full of joy, she would tell them what the Bible says of heaven,

repeating such passages as, "There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light." "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." These she would try to explain in her own words, and would give them beautiful descriptions of that world of love, probably as they were impressed upon her own mind.

"Oh, yes," she would say, "it will be a bright and beautiful place; and all good little children will go there. My dear little brother is there. He is an angel now, with pretty wings. Should you like to be an angel too?" Then she would ask each one if she thought herself a Christian, and if she wished to live with God; and would repeat what the Bible tells us to do to become Christians.

There was a little girl about Gratia's

age, who lived near her, and who became her playmate. They were often together.

One day, when she had been out playing with this little girl, she came to her mother and said, "Mother, I have been talking to Fannie about the Bible, and she liked to hear me. She has no mother, you know, to talk and pray with her, and I thought I would speak with her about it. She said she should like to become good. We had a very pleasant time."

Although Gratia was but five years old at this time, she was quite familiar with the holy book of God, and was never known to use its passages improperly. She was in the habit of reading a chapter to her mother every night before going to bed; and she would frequently take up the Bible in the course of the day and appear to read it with much interest.

It was during this year that Gratia's dear grandmother died; and she was

deeply grieved to see her aunt M. so sad. She would often see her weeping, when she not only tried to comfort her, but would pray for her.

One day Gratia came out of her little "room for prayer," as she called it, and said to her, "Aunty, I have been praying for you, that you need not feel so badly about grandmamma."

Gratia's *faith* was strong, though the summer of her life had been short. She looked to God always. She had such confidence in his care, that she could trust him for every thing, feeling safety in the greatest danger. She never expressed any fear in a severe thunder-storm. Even when very young, she would say to her mother, at such times, "Mother, God can take care of us as well in the storm as in the sunshine." She knew that the great God who had created her, and watched over her when an infant, would shield her still, and

would never let her escape from his watchful eye. And he will care for you, my dear children; you need have no fear, for it is God who sends both the storm and the calm.

The winter that Gratia was six years old, she learned to sing, and from the first her whole soul was engaged in it. She gave all her attention as well in learning to sing as in learning to read.

When at the singing-school, she was not turning around to see what was going on behind her, or whispering to the little girl who sat beside her; nor did she, in any way, try to attract the attention of others; but she listened to all her teacher said, and thus, after the second or third lesson, she could sing a tune alone.

Before attending singing-school, she had no correct idea of a tune, and when she commenced going, her mother had little expectation that she would learn to sing. She was extremely fond of music,

however, and was so delighted to be able to sing at home, that she would clap her hands and jump about with glee.

Among her favourite tunes were—

"Come, come, the summer now is here,"

and:

"Flowers, wild-wood flowers,"
"A charge to keep I have,"
"Lord, teach me how to pray,"
"To thee, O blessed Saviour," &c.

At the close of the term of singing-school a concert was given, and the little ones sung to us. Many of them sung entirely alone, and Gratia was one of these. Her teacher said to her, "Gratia, you may sing, 'The Cuckoo.'" She stepped out alone upon the platform, and sung it sweetly through, and so distinctly, that the whole audience could hear.*

* In such exhibitions too much care cannot be taken to prevent the excitement of vain or envious passions. There are always persons ready to flatter

Her voice was mellow, clear, and full. Most of my little readers love to sing, I am sure! It is a happy employment! If you do not now know, whenever you can you must try very hard to learn. I think you can learn, if you will only try *long* enough. Singing has a gentle and soothing influence upon children.

I have seen two little girls, who were crying and quarrelling with anger, quieted in a very few moments by being persuaded to sing together, and made as happy as if nothing unpleasant had occurred.

There is such a charm in music, it makes us love each other. Yes, and the

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the pride of children, especially if their ways are interesting and attractive; and it would seem better and safer to present them as seldom as possible to public observation. We do not apply this caution to the case in the text, supposing that under these circumstances no such danger was to be apprehended.

angels sing! The cherubs of heaven spread their wings, and with golden harps and holy voices swell the glorious song of the redeemed. My little sister and yours is singing now in yon fair world. Oh, 'tis a holy, holy work! Then learn to sing! and when you have wicked thoughts in your heart, or feel angry toward a brother or sister, or when you have been disobedient to your kind parents, or unkind to your playmates, sing the prettiest song you have learned. It will help to drive away all those wicked thoughts, and make you feel pleasant yourself, and all seem kind to you. Will you try it?

CHAPTER VI.

After the death of her infant brother, Gratia would amuse herself at times, making stories about a little sister; and when she was seven and a half years old, she was indeed made happy by the gift of a dear baby sister. She was greatly pleased, and gave her a name the first time she saw her. She called her Annie Huntington. "Why do you call her by that name, Gratia?" asked her aunt M. "Because you know, aunty, my name is Gratia, and if I call the baby Annie Huntington, it will be all mother's name."

Gratia was never weary of taking care of the baby, but once. She had been rocking the cradle for some time. There was something new in the kitchen, and

she ran to see it, when her little sister commenced crying.

Her mother called her, and said, "Gratia, I thought you would never be tired of taking care of a little sister." "I *did* think so, mother; but I don't think so now."

And have *you* a little sister? Well, do you love her so well that you are willing to do every thing you can for her? When your mother is very much fatigued and worried with care, do you rock the cradle, or try to amuse the baby with your playthings, or quiet her with your singing and frolicking? Or are you fretful and call, "Mother, I wish you *would* take the baby! I can't keep her still. I wish I didn't have to rock the cradle! Why can't I go and play now, mother?" No, I cannot believe you will show, for a moment, so unpleasant a disposition.

When Annie Huntington was about three months old, she was very sick, and

Gratia expressed all the tender anxiety that a mother feels. She would sit by the cradle and watch every motion of the suffering child. When she found her mother concerned lest her dear babe should die, she would try to comfort her, by saying, "Mother, if little sister does not live, it will be all well. God, you know, always does right, and she will be forever happy, and go to heaven, where there will be no more pain, no more sorrow." In this way she did truly comfort her, and made her feel how small would be the loss, compared with the treasure she found in Gratia.

Gratia would often pray with much earnestness that God would spare little sister's life, and that "she might love the Lord in her *early youth*, and be trained up to serve him, and to be useful in the world, and a comfort to her parents."

Sometimes she would say, "When sister can walk, I shall lead her out, and

show her the birds and the flowers, and tell her, *God made these.* I shall teach her to read, and tell her of heaven."

Will you remember this, little friends, and try to instruct *your* younger brothers and sisters in useful things? Did you say you were not old enough? You have forgotten that Gratia was but little more than seven years old at this time. Surely, you can teach them a great deal. If you are pleasant and courteous to everybody, and willing, at all times, to obey those who are over you, you can in this way teach them to be good; and that will be a *great* work for a little boy or girl to do.

You can tell them what you know about your heavenly Father, and all that he has made for you and them, and you can tell them what a dear father and mother he has given you. You can teach them of the birds and flowers, as Gratia did, and of the stars, the clouds, and the

glorious rainbow which God has made and placed in the sky, as a token that he will never drown the world again. There are many, many things, you can teach them. Perhaps you will have to tell your little sister a good many times before she will remember, because she is so young; but you must try and see how patient and persevering you can be; else I fear, she will think you unkind and selfish, and I am sure, you would not like much to be thought so,—much less to be so. Should you?

CHAPTER VII.

During the last summer of Gratia's life she learned to knit and sew, and in this way made herself quite useful.

There are not many little girls now who learn to knit; indeed, there are but few young ladies who understand the art of knitting. It is very useful, however, and ofttimes keeps children out of serious mischief. Most children are not pleased with it at first. Gratia was not, but she had a nice way to learn. She would knit a certain number of times round on her stocking, and then have a problem in arithmetic, "for her encouragement," as she would say. At last, in this way, she learned to love it.

She needed but very little instruction to sew, as she had learned most of the

stitches, in making garments for her dolls. Many happy hours she spent sewing or knitting by her mother's side. At such times she was full of conversation, usually selecting subjects of a serious nature, either upon good conduct, or something that would tend to improve her mind, or upon some topic in the Bible.

During the month of February preceding her death, after having been sitting, one day, for some moments in deep thought, she looked inquiringly up to her mother, and said, "Mother, I want to be a Christian. I wish you would tell me *just what I must do* to be a Christian. I want to be all ready to die, while I am well, so that when I come to die, I shall have nothing to do but to die."

After trying to explain to her what the Bible required, and telling her of the freeness of salvation, she burst into tears, saying, "Is that the way, mother? Did the Saviour die upon the cross *for me?*

For such a sinner as I?" "Yes, my dear," replied her mother; "he died for the chief of sinners."

"I want you to think over my *whole life*, mother, and try to remember all my sins!"

With great earnestness she then inquired, "Are those all you can remember, mother? Can't you recollect some others? I have thought of all those." "You know your besetting sin," replied her mother, "I have told you all the outward sins I can call to mind, but I do not know, Gratia, what sins you have committed since I have been sick." She then told her mother that she had committed two sins, and what they were; and added, "Mother, God has forgiven me those. I went to him, and asked him to forgive me, and he has forgiven me."

At another time, after having a similar conversation with her mother, she sat down upon the little cricket, exclaiming,

"Oh, mother, I am happy now! I am not afraid to die?"

"Do you think you are a Christian, Gratia?" asked her mother

"Yes, mother, I think I am." Her reply to this question had always been, before, "I should like to be," or, "I think I shall be," or, "I expect to be; for the Bible says, 'Ask and ye shall receive.'"

Again, at another time, she said, "I feel that I am a great sinner, but the Bible says, you know, mother, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin."

This dear child was not only desirous of being a child of God, by name, but by all the truthful motives of her heart she sought to know his will, and to do it. She was not content simply to *say* she was a Christian, until she knew what should be the character of one who professed to love God. Upon one occasion, she said to her mother, "I want to be a *real* Christian, mother!" Her mother,

being very much engaged at that moment, told her to ask her father about it. She then went to him with the inquiry, "Father, what is it to be a *real* Christian?" Her father took the holy book into his hands, and read to her such passages as he thought suitable to answer the question, and to assist her in her self-examination, after which her mind seemed to be at rest.

She was often interrupted in these pleasant conversations, by the entrance of some one, but they left their lasting impress upon her.

After Gratia had expressed the belief that she was indeed a Christian, she seemed watching to devour every good word, and her daily life was that of eagerness after the great truths of religion. She sought them everywhere; in her Bible; in all the works of God; and in the Sunday-school. She loved dearly to attend this blessed institution, where she

could hear and speak of Christ her Saviour. Her lessons were learned from a book of questions and answers, and she never failed of a *perfect* lesson at school.

Now, Emily, and Hattie, and Henry, how do you suppose she could *always* have a perfect lesson? I will tell you. She did not wait until Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning, before she learned it.

It is but a short time, since I heard a kind mother saying to her Emma and Frank, "Come, my dears, 'tis Saturday afternoon, and you must get your Sunday-school lesson." But with a sullen little pout, Emma says—

"I don't want to get it to-day! There will be plenty of time to-morrow morning! Say, mother, must I get it?"

"Yes, my dear, you must learn it to-day," replied her mother, with decision. And with the impatient and thoughtless exclamation, "Oh dear, I wish I didn't

have to go to Sunday-school!" Emma threw herself upon the sofa.

Think of it, dear children—"not wish to go to Sunday-school!" Do you ever wish *you* were not obliged to go? Do you not wish to know about that dear blessed Saviour, who came into the world, and suffered and died for you? Do you not wish to know the way to that bright world beyond the grave? And do you not wish to know about those beautiful mansions and the great white throne, where Jesus sits to receive the praise and adoration of all saints? If you do, then go to the Sunday-school; and may you delight to go! I hope little Emma will read this book; for I think she would never say again that she does not want to go to Sunday-school.

But I see by your anxious faces that you are waiting to know how our little Gratia always had a perfect lesson. You desire to do as well as she did. Well,

she always learned it in advance. By that I mean, she learned some time before she was to recite it. Her mother remarked to me once, that often, when she had a few moments of leisure, she would say, "Gratia, now is a good time to learn a little of your Sunday-school lesson." Her reply would usually be—

"Oh, mother, I learned *that* lesson a week ago—or a long time ago," and many times she would have it committed two and three weeks in advance.

CHAPTER VIII.

Dear child, do you ever think how beautiful the sky is? When you look at the soft, floating clouds, and watch their ever-changing forms, tracing mountains and cities, animals and men, do you remember who it is that has made this glorious sky, and who now permits you to enjoy it?

Gratia, too, was fond of gazing at the sky, especially at sunset; and she would often exclaim, "Come, mother, come and see the golden clouds! Oh, how beautiful they are! Where do you suppose heaven is? The Bible says, our Saviour was carried *up* to heaven, and that he will come in the clouds of heaven." And then she would watch the stars as they appeared one by one, until they sparkled

like brilliant gems over the entire firmament; and she would repeat that little hymn, which I presume you learned a long time ago—

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star!"

Every thing she saw seemed to make her happy! Her young heart was full of love and sympathy. "She lived to love." But most of all she loved God and his works, and her soul praised him continually. She desired to be sincere in her worship and in her Christianity; for so her conversation proved. Her mother says, "At one time Gratia said to me, 'What is it, mother, to pray with the heart?' I explained it to her, when she quickly replied, 'Then I pray with the *heart*, mother!' No morning passed without that sweet, earnest petition, 'Mother, you will pray with me to-day?' and if no opportunity presented for us to retire for that purpose, she would come again,

and whisper the request in my ear. No play would cause her to forget it; and when the hour came, she would plead with God, with all the fervour, sincerity, and simplicity with which she would ask a favour of her earthly parents. Before retiring at night, she always spent some time in prayer; and though she loved her dear parents so ardently, she felt that Christ, her Saviour, was more than they, and worthy of her supreme affections; and she would frequently say in her prayer, 'May I love thee, O Lord, better than father or mother or *any thing*.'"

She would sometimes wish to engage in prayer more than once, and would say, "I can pray after I get into bed." Gratia had a particular hour for retiring, and did not (like many little girls I have seen) as soon as that hour came, begin to tease her mother to allow her to sit up a little longer. Pleasantly would she

go to her bed and there lie awake one, two, and sometimes three hours, spending that time in singing, praying, and in reflection.

A friend (often a visitor to her father's house) says of her in this particular, — "It was not uncommon for her to lie in her little bed, all alone and in the silent darkness, without the least noise or disturbance, from eight o'clock until ten and even eleven, when suddenly her bird-like voice would be heard singing some of her little songs of praise as cheerfully as though sitting by her mother's knee. To gratify my curiosity, I once opened the bed-room door, saying, 'Why, Gratia, not asleep yet?' She looked up immediately, and pleasantly said, 'No, I'm not asleep. I've been thinking.'"

It was her custom to go away by herself to pray, immediately after family devotions, and during the last winter of her

life, frequently, at different hours of the day, her mother would indistinctly hear her voice from the parlour, as of one engaged in earnest supplication.

On the last Sabbath of her life, while she was yet in health, her dear father explained to her the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians. It was his custom every Sabbath to talk with her upon some chapter in the precious Word of God. At the time of which I speak she seemed to be particularly interested in what he had to say. Her questions and answers were very thoughtful, and well adapted to a mind of riper years. Her last remark upon the chapter was, as she stood looking him eagerly in the eye, "Well, father, when *Faith* and *Hope* are no longer needed, *Charity* will remain forever."

But the time had now come for little Gratia's faith and hope to be tried by the suffering of death.

Yes, my dear children, Gratia must

die! but it was not hard for her. Though a little child, she could talk and think of dying without fear; and you need not fear death, if you are a child of God.

Do you remember, when your little brother died, how your mother wished you to smooth his forehead, and how you started back, saying, "Why, mother, how cold he is!" and do you remember that he could not move nor see, and when you spoke to him so tenderly, he could not hear nor speak? and how very pale he was—how still and stiff he lay upon the little table in the parlour—and how the snowy shroud was wrapped about him? And do you remember, too, how the little dark coffin was brought, and the dear baby laid in it—and how the people came, and the good minister came to speak to all of you; and do you remember what he said about children dying and going far away to live with God? And after the minister had asked God to

bless your dear, afflicted parents and the weeping brothers and sisters, do you remember how slowly you went to the place of burial, and you asked your mother why she wept, when, taking your little hand in her's, she said, "My child, it is because we are going to lay little brother in the ground, where we cannot see him again;" and then how you cried, and asked if you might be put in the ground with the baby, because he would be afraid to be alone—he was so small! Do you remember all this?

Well, my dear children, you, too, must die some time, and your body will be senseless and cold; and your eyes will be closed like the baby's; but you need not be afraid. If you love God and try to serve him, he will take care of you, and you will *wish* to go and live with him, for it is only your body that will die, and be put in the ground. Your happy spirit will rise and soar away to heaven,

like a bird ,soaring to the skies; and there you will sing sweet songs, and play upon the golden harp that Christ will give you. When you think of these things, and that Jesus will be there to care for you, it will seem *pleasant* to die.

Thus it was with Gratia.

A few weeks before her death, a young lady, sixteen years of age, a friend of her's, was taken ill, and died in a few days.

Gratia manifested great anxiety for the spiritual welfare of this loved friend, and after her mother was better and able to pray with her, she never failed to pray for Lucy, that the Lord would restore her to health, or else prepare her for heaven.

One day, some one came in, and in conversation said, "I fear Lucy cannot live long." Gratia looked very sorry, and, with tears in her eyes, said, "Mother, I should like to see Lucy once more." She was soon after carried to see her,

and afterwards told her mother about their interview: "I asked Lucy, if she loved the Saviour, and if she thought she was a Christian, and whether, if she died, she should go to heaven."

CHAPTER IX.

GRATIA was ill a number of days before her disease assumed a dangerous form. One night, waking suddenly from sleep, she exclaimed, "I am blind, mother! I am dying! I am dying!" "Should you be alarmed, Gratia, if you knew you were dying?" inquired her mother. She immediately replied, "Oh no, mother!" Soon after she asked her father to pray with her.

She never hesitated to speak of the goodness of God to her, especially in giving her praying parents. At one time,

during her sickness, she said to her father, "How good God is to me to give me such a kind, good father, while some little children have no father and no one to pray with them!" At another time she said to him, "Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden is light." She did not feel that it was hard to suffer, but pleasant and easy, for the sake of her dear Redeemer.

I have told you how very fond of singing Gratia was. While she was sick, she wanted very much to sing, but could not, as it caused her a great deal of pain. She would sometimes say, "I would like to sing, if it did not make my head ache so," and would often commence, but she could bear the sound only for a very short time.

Dear little Gratia suffered much during her last illness, and she would frequently exclaim, in agony, "Oh, mother! I'm in *such a distress—distress—tress!*"

Her mother would ask, "Where do you feel so badly, my dear?" "In my head;" and sometimes her reply was, "All over." Her disease progressed rapidly now, and the attending physicians said she could not recover.

She had many times told her mother, if she was taken ill, and her physician thought she could not recover, she should wish to be told of it immediately; and it was with an aching heart that her father now said to her, "Gratia, my darling, we fear you can never get well." Do you think she was alarmed at this intelligence? No! She calmly replied, "When I die, father, the Lord will give me angels' wings to fly where little brother is."

"Sweet child! no fear of death's dark dream,
Nor doubt, nor dread, came shadowy o'er
Thy spirit then. Thine was the trust
Of childish faith—thy look beyond
The grave, far in the spirit-land,
Where angels dwell with God."

She soon after said to him, "I want to go home to my blessed Saviour."

"The Lord, thy blessed Saviour, bore thee in his bosom home.
A lamb within the fold thou art; for he has said
Of such his kingdom is!"

Her mother says, "Gratia always met me with a smile, when entering her room. At one time, while looking with deep anxiety upon her pale face, and not returning her smile, she said to me, 'You are not happy, mother. You do not smile on me.'"

The Friday before her death, her physicians thought her symptoms more favourable, and her mother said to her, on seeing her in the morning, "You are better, Gratia."

She looked up to her mother, and quietly replied, "I am much worse, mother!"

"We think you *very much* better."

"Oh no, mother; I am much worse!"

CHAPTER X.

One morning early, a few days before Gratia's death, as her aunt was seated beside her bed, watching her countenance, she suddenly opened her eyes, and reaching out her thin, pale hand, said, in her natural tone, "Aunt Mary, I want to kiss you once more." Her aunt, being greatly affected by the request, did not go to her at once, and she said again—"Aunt Mary Jane, I want to have you come here; I want to kiss you once more, for the last time." Her aunt went to her, and bent over her to receive indeed from those fevered lips the last, last token of her love. After she had kissed her, she said, "Will you call my mother? I want to see my mother."

"Your mother is not dressed yet, dear Gratia," she replied: "try and go to sleep again, and I will call her when you awake."

"I want to see her *now*, Aunt Mary Jane, for the last time,"—she immediately repeated in an earnest tone; "and I want to see all the family. I want to bid them all good-by for the last time."

Her aunt left the room to call her mother, and when she entered it, the plaintive voice of her dying child fell upon her ear, with the words, "Good-by, dear mother! Good-by! Farewell, *my* mother!"

She continued to plead so earnestly to see all the family, that they were called. As each one entered the room, she repeated, "Good-by! Good-by!" She then asked especially to see the baby, and with a look of ardent love, of deep, deep tenderness, her eyes rested upon little Annie, as she softly said, "*Dear*

little sister!" Her father said to her, "Shall I take the baby out?" "Not while she is quiet." When he carried her away, Gratia's eyes followed wistfully after them, and again she softly said, "Good-by, my little sister! Good-by, my dear father!" Not seeing, by her bedside, the coloured girl who had been brought up in her father's family, and who had taken much care of her, and to whom she was warmly attached, she inquired, "Where is Laura? I want to bid *her* good-by."

As her mother approached the bed, she said, "I am dying, mother." Her mother replied, "Gratia is safe in Christ." She raised her full black eyes, and, with the most perfect confidence and childish simplicity, exclaimed, "The Lord is my Shepherd—how happy am I! Mother, will you pray with me?" After prayer, she asked, "May I pray, mother?" She then uttered her last audible prayer, full

of resignation and of sincere faith. So fervent, so pure, so elevating, and so mature! — The following are her exact words:

"O Lord, forgive all my sins! Bless my dear father and mother and little sister, and keep them alive, and bless all; — — — — let thy kingdom come.— — — — O Lord, bless *me*, and give me patience — — — and may I be encircled in the arms of my Saviour.— — — May we all meet in heaven and sing glory— — — and when I leave, may I be enfolded in the arms of my Saviour, and sing glory, glory — — — glory, glory forever and— — — forever — — through Jesus Christ the dear Redeemer.— —Amen."

She spoke this slowly, but very distinctly, making a long pause between some of the sentences.

Never again was her dear mother permitted to converse with her.

A short season of suffering followed,

when the angel came and gently bore away her infant spirit to the presence of her loved Redeemer.

"We watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing, soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

"So silently we seem'd to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her being out.

"Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying, when she slept,
And sleeping, when she died.

"For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eye-lids closed — she had
Another morn than ours."

So passed away the life of this precious lamb! Many children attended her

funeral, and the tears fell fast into that little coffin as they turned away, wishing and resolving to be good. They then sung Gratia's favourite hymn:

"The Lord is my Shepherd: how happy am I!
How tender and watchful my wants to supply!
He daily provides me with raiment and food:
Whate'er he denies me is meant for my good.

"The Lord is my Shepherd: then I must obey
His gracious commandments and walk in his way,
His fear he will teach me, my heart he'll renew,
And though I'm so sinful, my sins he'll subdue.

"The Lord is my Shepherd: how happy am I!
I'm blest while I live, and blest when I die;
In death's gloomy valley no evil I dread,
For 'I will be with thee,' my Shepherd has said.

"The Lord is my Shepherd: I'll sing with delight,
Till called to adore him in regions of light;
Then praise him with angels, to bright harps of gold,
And ever and ever his glory behold."

CONCLUSION.

DEAR CHILDREN, that you may, like Gratia, be affectionate and kind, be thoughtful, be earnest to do good, be pure-minded, seeking after the things that make for your peace, is the sincere prayer of one who loves you.

Perhaps you would like to read what Gratia's pastor said of her:—

"There is not often any thing in the lives of those who die so young that is worthy of public notice; but there is much in every child that dies that is interesting to its parents and friends, and will be remembered by them.

"I wish to record a few facts respecting this child, that are interesting to all:

"1. She never attended school a day in her life. She was instructed by her pa-

rents. She learned to read when four years old, and was able to read in four weeks from the time she began to learn the alphabet. This shows that children need not be three months, as they often are, in learning the alphabet, and a year in learning to read easy sentences.

"2. She was shielded entirely from the evil influences of the world; never heard sacred things spoken of lightly, or scornfully, or as if untrue. She therefore received religious instruction, and believed what she heard.

"The minds of mankind are so generally perverted by the cavils and objections they hear, that divine truth often makes but a very feeble impression upon them. We learn, from the effect of truth upon her mind, that its influence is far greater, if given before the individual comes in contact with evil.

"3. She read the Bible, both the Old Testament and the New, with great de-

light, apparently with, at least, as much interest as she read other books.

"4. She conscientiously observed the Sabbath. She was particular to put away all her books and playthings that were around during the week, before sunset on Saturday, exchanging them for such books as were suitable for the Sabbath. This she did without being told.

"5. During the last winter, her mind was deeply impressed with religious truth —her exercises were like those of adults. She became, in the judgment of all who were acquainted with her feelings, a subject of renewing grace, and has left as satisfactory evidence of genuine conversion as we often find in those of riper years.

"I record these facts not to eulogize the dead, but for the benefit of the living. Let children read and remember them."

In Gratia's little bookcase, which her mother opened after her death, she found

the following, which the dear child had probably selected for her own reading:

"A mother bent with anxious eye,
And gazed upon her child,
And, as she felt that she must die,
Her heart with grief was wild.
'Oh, leave me, leave me not!' she cried,
'How can I give thee up?
'Twill rend anew my bursting heart;
'Tis death to drink this cup!'
The little sufferer saw her tears,
As in her arms she lay;
And, with a sweet, but feeble voice,
She thus was heard to say:

"'Mother, weep not;—I'm going home;
Where pain and sickness will not come;
This aching head will shortly rest
At peace upon my Saviour's breast.

"'Oh, then, dear mother, dry that tear,
And learn to hope, though I'm not here;
For I shall be an angel bright,
Rejoicing in yon world of light.

"'My heavenly Father calls to me;
My Saviour's open arms I see;
I hear their voice; I know 'tis so;
Then weep not, mother; I must go.

"'I slept; and oh, in visions sweet,
There came a form I loved to greet,
I saw a beauteous angel stand,
And beckon to me with his hand.

"'Then, mother, wipe those weeping eyes
I leave you, to ascend the skies;
Have faith and hope; let me obey
These voices calling me away!'

"She ceased—and fainter grew her breath,
Then closed her eyes of love;
She smiled; then angel-wings received,
And sought her home above.
But to that stricken mother's heart
New strength and faith had come;
She saw her die, then meekly said,—
'*Thy will, not mine, be done!*'"

I do not think, my dear children, you can in all things be like Gratia, but you

can try to be good and love that Great God, who has so infinitely blessed you.

Little Annie, whom Gratia loved so well, is still living, and is now old enough to read this little book. May she learn to be useful and to walk in that "strait and narrow way," which Gratia sought and found!

It is many years since this dear child went down to the tomb, but her loveliness is still enshrined in a mother's heart. She mourns as deeply now as then, but she is made glad with thoughts of her darling in her bright home above, where she will, one day, meet her, and they shall be no more separated; no, never! May your weeping mothers chant with her—

"I loved thee, daughter of my heart!
My child, I loved thee dearly;
And, though we only met to part,
How sweetly! how severely!
Nor life nor death can sever
My soul from thine forever.

"The days, my little one, were few;
An angel's morning visit,
That came and vanished with the dew,—
'Twas here, 'tis gone,—where is it?
Yet didst thou leave behind thee
A clue for love to find thee.

"Gratia, my first, my eldest love,
The crown of every other!
Though thou art born in heaven above,
I am thine only mother;
Nor will affection let me
Believe thou canst forget me.

'Then thou in heaven, and I on earth,—
May this one hope delight us,
That thou wilt hail my second birth,
When death shall reunite us,
Where worlds no more can sever
Parent and child forever!"

THE END.

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CHILDREN'S ROOM

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The little missionary

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